



# UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

October 18, 2006

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## **Guilty Plea in Worldwide eBay Fraud Scheme Involving Over 5,000 Victims**

(Newport News, VA) - Rachel Reyes, age 46, of Hampton, Virginia, pled guilty to one count of wire fraud for her role in distributing fraudulent celebrity memorabilia items on eBay. Chuck Rosenberg, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, made the announcement after Reyes' plea was accepted yesterday by United States District Judge Walter D. Kelley, Jr.

Reyes and two co-conspirators operated their own eBay accounts for the sale of the counterfeit memorabilia, which included record albums and photographs of celebrities with forged signatures. To conduct the fraud scheme, Reyes and her co-conspirators purchased unsigned memorabilia from various locations in Virginia and then forged celebrity signatures on those items. Reyes subsequently posted the items for auction on eBay's Internet website. The listings falsely described these items as authentic and offered fraudulent certificates of authenticity. From July 5, 2002 through March 11, 2005, Reyes personally completed 5,266 sales of memorabilia with forged signatures to 3,360 victims with losses totaling approximately \$314,978. In addition, Reyes helped her co-conspirators complete an additional 3,057 sales of memorabilia with signatures forged by Reyes totaling \$257,168.96 in losses to 2,337 victims. Victims were located throughout all 50 states of the United States as well as 33 other countries.

Reyes is scheduled to be sentenced on January 22, 2007. She faces 20 years in prison, followed by 3 years of supervised release, and has already agreed to pay full restitution in the amount of \$572,147.93 to the victims.

The investigation was conducted by Secret Service. eBay also provided assistance during the investigation. Assistant United States Attorney Michael Gill prosecuted the case for the United States.

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